

Reading: Psalm 97

***“Just as the One who called you is holy, be holy yourselves
in all your conduct and manner of living” (1 Pet 1:15)***

God is Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Omniscient, Love, Unchanging and Holy. But the only character that is thrice-repeated in any doxology found in the Bible is God’s holiness. We have one example in the Old Testament and the other in the New. In Isaiah’s vision the heavenly creatures called seraphim cried to one another, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts!” (Isa 6:3). In John’s revelation of open heaven the four living creatures kept worshipping God, saying, “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!” (Rev 4:8).

To say the word “holy” twice in Hebrew is to describe someone as most holy. To say the word “holy” thrice intensifies the idea to the highest level. In the majority of Greek texts the word “holy” in Revelation 4:8 occurs nine times! Undoubtedly holiness dominates all other characters of God.

The crossing of the Red Sea was a miracle of miracles for the people of Israel. Rivers at times dry up but who has ever heard of the sea getting separated? Following their miracle march on the dry land of the seabed, Moses and the children of Israel sang an immortal song to the Lord. The most exuberant exclamation is found in the middle of the song: “Who is like You, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like You, glorious in **holiness**, fearful in praises, doing wonders?” (Ex 15:11). They had heard about the gods of Egyptians and other gentiles. But in the Jehovah God they saw something unique.

We believe in the Trinity of Godhead as revealed in the Bible. There is one God and He is three Persons — God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Each of them is all-holy. In His high priestly prayer the Lord Jesus addressed His Father as “Holy Father” (Jn 17:11). The angel told Mary that the Son of God to be born of her would be the “Holy One” (Lk 1:35). The very name of the third Person of Trinity is the “Holy Spirit” (Jn 14:26). A definition of theology is “the knowledge of the Holy One” (Prov 9:10).

Holiness is not only the most outstanding character of God, but it is also His most desired quality in His people. The Father’s passion, the Son’s pattern, and the Spirit’s presence are all sufficient for us in our pursuit of holiness.

*Holy, Holy, Holy! though the darkness hide Thee,
Though the eye of sinful man Thy glory may not see;
Only Thou art holy, there is none beside Thee,
Perfect in power, in love, and purity!*

(Bishop Reginald Heber, 1783-1826)

Our Father who is in Heaven,

We worship You as the Most Holy God. You are calling us to worship You in the beauty of holiness. You are calling us to worship You by lifting up holy hands. Thank You for clothing us with the robe of righteousness of Christ so we may approach Your awesome presence with boldness. You are perfect, O Lord. Your name is holy. Your dwelling place is holy. All Your deeds are holy.

Dear Lord, more than for anything else, You have called us to holiness. We cannot make ourselves holy, O God. How can we, Lord? You are holy and at the same time, Almighty. Yes, Lord, Your exceedingly great power is available to us to make us holy. You are holy and at the same time You are the Lord of Hosts. Yes, Lord, Satan and all his armies cannot stop Your work of sanctification in our lives. We worship You as the Lord who sanctifies us.

Thank You, Father, for sending Your Son not only to become sin for us but also to become our righteousness. But for His pattern, we would not know how to walk in holiness in this sin-stained world. But for the new heart You have given us, we would not be able to obey You. But for the new Spirit You have filled us with, we would not be able to understand Your ways. But for Your writing of Your law and commandments on our hearts, we would not remember them at the hour of temptation. But for Your holy Word, we would not have a sword to fight Satan. But for the holy company of Your people, we would not be able to escape the deceitfulness of sin. What more do we need, O Lord, to obey Your call for holiness? Thank You for all these merciful provisions which are much more than our need.

Father God, forgive us for taking advantage of Your forgiving love and doing what does not please You. Forgive us for taking advantage of Your grace and continuing in sin. Help us, O God, to respect the merits of Calvary and not trample Christ's blood underfoot. Save us from wilful sinning. We pray for those of us on pulpits and in leadership positions. Let us walk with reverential fear before You remembering that the judgment will be severer for us. Let us be characterised by sincerity, honesty and integrity as against hypocrisy.

Gracious Lord, we thank You for justifying us and sanctifying us. We look forward to our glorification at the Return of our Redeemer, even Your Son. In His holy Name, we offer this prayer. Amen!

*(Isa 6:3; Psa 46:4; 68:5; 96:9; 1 Tim 2:8; Heb 3:12-14; 8:8-11; 10:19-22,26-29; Lk 1:49;
1 Pet 1:15,17; Lev 20:7,8; 2 Cor 5:21; Ezek 36:26,27; Eph 6:17; Rom 6:1,2; Phil 3:20,21)*